



SANTA CRUZ HIGHWAY 1/17 MERGE LANE PROJECT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's)

1. What is included in the project?	<p>This project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add an auxiliary lane to northbound Route 1 between the Morrissey Boulevard overcrossing and Route 17• Add an auxiliary lane to northbound Route 17 between Route 1 and the Pasatiempo overcrossing• Add an auxiliary lane to southbound Route 1 between Route 17 and La Fonda Avenue• Construct retaining walls• Construct new bridge structures• Widen or replace existing bridge structures• Realign the Emeline Avenue off-ramp• Realign the southbound Route 1 Morrissey Boulevard off-ramp• Realign the eastbound Morrissey Boulevard to southbound Route 1 on-ramp• Construct soundwalls• Construct concrete median barriers• Improve highway drainage systems• Landscape the project area <p><i>Note: This project will not change the actual fishhook at the interchange</i></p>
2. Why is this project needed?	<p>Currently the Route 1/17 interchange area is experiencing peak hour congestion and higher than expected accident rates. The traffic volumes through the interchange have surpassed the original design volumes, resulting in congestion, inefficient traffic flow and accidents. Existing traffic that approaches the Route 1 and Route 17 interchange are making merge decisions within a short length and the merging areas are at capacity during the peak hour. The purpose of and need for the proposed project is to target specific areas within the Route 1/Route 17 interchange where cost-effective improvements can be implemented to address local safety and operational deficiencies. This project will also consider coordination of future improvements to the Route 1/Route 17 Interchange area. The purpose and need for the proposed project has been presented to and supported by the public.</p>
3. Is this project different from the Hwy. 1 Widening project that was included in the Nov. '04 sales tax measure?	<p>Yes. The Hwy. 1 Widening project proposes HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) Lanes along the Highway 1 corridor from the 1/17 Interchange south to near Watsonville. The 1/17 Merge Lanes project proposes merge lanes at the interchange to improve traffic operation at the interchange (see 1).</p>
4. Will this project affect congestion at the "fishhook?"	<p>Although the purpose of the project is primarily to improve safety, an additional lane will be added through the interchange area, which will improve flow in the short term.</p>
5. What is the total cost of the project?	<p>\$52 million. Construction Cost: \$42.5M, Right of Way Cost: \$1.4M, Design/Environmental: \$8.1M.</p>
6. Why has the project been postponed?	<p>Availability of state funds for both Right of Way Acquisitions, and Construction has delayed the project.</p>
7. Will construction affect traffic?	<p>The project will be staged to minimize construction noise and also minimize disruption to mainline freeway traffic and local traffic. Night-time work, ramp closures, and local road detours are construction elements that will be used. Advance media announcements will be provided to alert the public of the current construction staging and the potential delays.</p>
8. How will construction affect neighbors?	<p>Local traffic will be detoured at various times during construction. Also see Question 7 response.</p>
9. Will soundwalls be included in the project? If so, where will they be located?	<p>Yes, neighbors are overwhelmingly supportive. You may look at the soundwall location map online at www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/scr_1_17/</p>
10. When will the soundwalls be built?	<p>Soundwalls will be built before major highway work to help reduce construction noise.</p>
11. Will trees be eliminated?	<p>Yes, however, an aggressive re-landscaping plan has been developed replacing removed trees. Many of the trees being removed are non-native species (acacia). These trees will be replaced by natives with higher scenic and habitat value.</p>

